

October 31, 1999

Title of Partnership/Project:

NASA's GSFC Earth and Space Science K-12 Investigations Project

Name of Principal Investigator:

Dr. Robert Gabrys, Chief

GSFC Education Office

Statement of Purpose/goals of partnerships/project

The Purpose of the Project:

1. To establish a network of teachers who will be trained and work within their school districts to encourage the use of NASA Internet-based investigations among their colleagues, participate in pilot testing and provide feedback through an electronic format for the improvement of the investigations.
2. Establish an electronic feedback system on-line.
3. Pilot test investigations electronically.

Goals/Objectives for the Past Quarter:

1. To establish the on-line electronic feedback system accessible through the GSFC education homepage. See: <<http://education.gsfc.nasa.gov>>
2. To develop the structure for the research design for a pilot testing model.
3. To begin putting investigations on-line for use with electronic feedback system.

What Have We Accomplished?

1. The model for the electronic feedback system is on-line through the GSFC homepage.
2. The structure for the research design for pilot testing has been completed.
3. Approximately 75% of the investigations have been finalized and put on-line for pilot testing.

Good News/Challenges

1. Response from teachers informally hearing about the availability of the investigations on-line has been positive.

2. An unintended effect is that a major curriculum development project with Montgomery and Anne Arundel Counties in Maryland is making use of the electronic material in new earth/space science courses to be implemented in September 2000, and are willing to participate in the pilot test.
3. The amount of work to get investigations developed by classroom teacher “web-ready” is much more time consuming than originally thought, primarily because of teacher unfamiliarity with web design.
4. We were able to work out arrangements for forward funding the project with the NASA GSFC business office.
5. 20 teachers have been involved with us to date.

Early Lessons Learned

1. Curriculum development by teachers, while politically correct, calls for more skill than just being a classroom teacher.
2. Connecting to National Standards from more than a perception-based decision structure is new ground that has very few promising practices associated with it.
3. Teachers have a genuine interest in accessing materials that will help them improve instruction.